

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION

In December 2005, the United Nations Convention against Corruption became the first legally binding, global anti-corruption agreement.

PREVENTION

This chapter embraces wide-ranging measures directed at both the public and private sectors, including model preventive policies, such as the establishment of anti-corruption bodies and enhanced transparency in the financing of elections, citizens' rights and the involvement of civil society in raising public awareness of corruption and what can be done about it.

CRIMINALIZATION

The Convention requires countries to criminalize a wide range of acts, including bribery, embezzlement of public funds, money-laundering and obstruction of justice. It also recommends that other acts, such as trading in influence, be criminalized. The Convention promotes cooperation between law enforcement agencies, the protection of witnesses and the removal of bank secrecy as a barrier for prosecution.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Criminals can no longer flee their countries and live without fear of prosecution. The Convention provides for mutual legal assistance in gathering and transferring evidence for use in court and to extradite offenders. Countries are also required to help trace, freeze and confiscate the proceeds of corruption.

ASSET RECOVERY

In a major breakthrough, nations agreed that asset recovery is "a fundamental principle of the Convention." Identifying and recovering stolen assets is a major challenge. This is a particularly important issue for many developing countries where high-level corruption has eroded much-needed public resources.

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

A Conference of States Parties has been established to oversee the implementation of the Convention.



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UNODC's GLOBAL WORK:

UNODC has provided technical assistance and training to over one hundred countries in the last five years. The Office's aim is to help States to build long-term capacity in order to give teeth to domestic anti-corruption efforts. Some of its tools include the:

- [Legislative Guide for the Implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption](#)
- [Technical Guide for Policy-makers and Practitioners for the Implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption \(2007\)](#)
- [Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool](#)
- [Anti-corruption Toolkit](#)
- [United Nations Handbook on Practical Anti-corruption Measures for Prosecutors and Investigators \(2007\)](#)
- [Anti-corruption country assessments](#)



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

CORRUPTION

Your **NO** counts



*You can stop corruption
and ...*

*... strengthen your
health care system*

WITH CORRUPTION EVERYONE PAYS

Nobody needs to be lectured on the evils of corruption. Societies that have massive corruption suffer misery in a thousand ways. The assumption that “free” markets and non-intervention are the sole remedies against corruption is simply

wrong. Each country produces its own type of corruption and no system is corruption-free.

We at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) believe that something can be done. Governments, the private sector, NGOs, the media, religious organizations and, most importantly, citizens, all have an important part to play.

Citizens winning against corruption

- An eastern European country used anti-corruption tools to remove or demote corrupt tax collection officials. Tax revenues increased 32 per cent the following year.
- A western African country created a commission which not only ferreted out corrupt officials but succeeded in recovering billions of dollars that had been stolen and hidden in bank accounts outside the country.
- Two news reporters uncovered fixed bidding in a central American country, leading to the arrest of two former Presidents of the nation.
- The Chief Comptroller in a Pacific island country exposed six government ministers as being corrupt because of improper payments made to them.
- An NGO in an Asian country helps local people collect information on corruption and shows them how to share success stories in dealing with corruption in local income tax offices and the electricity board.




*... help attract
investment
to develop
your country*

CONTROLLING CORRUPTION WORKS

Rooting out corruption:

- ▶ allows social and economic **DEVELOPMENT**. Companies, small and large, find it easier to stay in business when the artificial tax of corruption is removed.
- ▶ increases both domestic and foreign **INVESTMENT**. Everyone is more willing to invest in countries when they see that funds are not being siphoned off into the pockets of corrupt officials.
- ▶ supports **DEMOCRACY**. Countries that successfully attack corruption are far more legitimate in the eyes of their citizens, creating stability and trust.
- ▶ creates an environment of **RULE OF LAW**. Citizens and businesses feel confidence in their legal institutions’ ability to address disputes in a fair and honest manner and protect human rights.
- ▶ limits the impact of **ORGANIZED CRIME, ILLICIT DRUGS, TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS** and **TERRORISM**.



*... ensure education for
your children*

TAKING ACTION

What steps can be taken to control corruption?

The world has a single, comprehensive platform for fighting corruption –the UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION. This Convention has only been in effect since December 2005. As the first legally binding, international anti-corruption instrument, this Convention provides a unique opportunity to mount a global response to a global problem.

Why is that important? Because now all national, regional and multi-national anti-corruption efforts have a single anti-corruption “backbone” negotiated by more than 140 countries. Together, we are stronger.

But that Convention is only a well-meaning piece of paper unless it is implemented. UNODC, as custodian of the anti-corruption Convention, attaches high priority to assisting states to implement the measures in the Convention, and to ensure that there is effective review of implementation.

UNODC’s anti-corruption initiatives:

- ensure worldwide ratification of the Convention and creation of effective anti-corruption legislation
- help create and maintain independent anti-corruption bodies
- help countries to guarantee integrity in their criminal justice institutions
- provide guidance for effective methods for recovery of the proceeds of corruption at the domestic and international level
- provide effective training for corruption prevention, investigation, prosecution and adjudication
- build partnerships with other agencies, international organizations and NGOs active in anti-corruption policy-making, technical assistance, internal oversight and advocacy.
- promote the International Day against Corruption (9 December) to enhance the awareness of citizens about the impact of corruption on their lives and about solutions to corruption.